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DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

by Nancy H. McMoneagle

Nancy McMoneagle has been associated with the work of Bob Monroe for 20 years and became director of The Monroe Institute in 1983. Under her leadership, the Institute has expanded to include international programs, Hemi-Sync® workshops in local communities throughout the United States, and an overall increase of programs and products available to the public.

What shape are we in? This is the question oft asked by administrators, usually in reference to the proverbial bottom line. Though definitely concerned about the Institute's financial viability, I also ask that question with regard to what old boundaries we have pushed through, how we have stretched beyond our old shape and form to embrace and reflect new dimensions in our growth pattern. And, looking back over our past, reflecting on our current status, and anticipating our planned future activities, I am genuinely pleased at the ever-expanding, everchanging shape of the Institute.

Since I am frequently asked about the early beginnings of the Institute, I thought it would be timely and propitious, as we begin this new decade, to share my perspective on the Institute's history, where we are now, and what we foresee for the coming year.

Though it was preceded by many years of Bob's personal research, the Institute had its official beginnings in the early '70s. Originally called Whistlefield Research Laboratories, and then subsequently, The Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences, the Institute consisted of Bob Monroe (founder and chief executive); a small group of eager, curious, and courageous individuals (called Pathfinders/Explorers); and myself (secretary, program coordinator, registrar, trainer, Explorer and monitor). It was a small group, indeed, to implement the enormous vision initiated by Bob Monroe... to explore, develop and give practical application to expanded states of consciousness in order to bring something of value to contemporary culture.

Beyond our numerous weekly Explorer sessions, during which we researched the effects of various Hemi-Sync sound patterns and sent Explorers "out" (in?) to obtain information on specific questions, we also offered the M-5000 Training Program. The M-5000 was so named because our intent was to train five thousand people in the arts of consciousness expansion and personal development. The very first program was presented at Esalen in 1973 by Bob and an engineer associate, Bill Yost. In a weekend format, the M-5000 consisted of hour-long, taped Hemi-Sync exercises in Focus 10 and 12 which, interspersed with discussions, meals, and short rest periods, went on around the clock. Needless to say, this 24-hour vigil kept by the two trainers, and the discomfort of participants lying for long hours in a prone position,

made us take a look at redesigning the program. Nevertheless, the workshop was a huge success. Word about this intensive and unique program spread quickly as the participants shared their experiences with others. Requests started coming in to bring the M-5000 to various regions of the country.

The M-5000 training eventually evolved into the Gateway Programs. These programs included the *Excursion* (one day in Focus 10); the *Weekend* (2 days in Focus 10 and 12); the *Advanced 15 Weekend* (21/2 days in Focus 10, 12, and 15); and the ten-day *Explorations* (later to become the six-day Voyage). We shortened the tapes to 45 minutes, inserted more break times, and had standard sleep periods (with the exception of an occasional 2:00 a.m. tape). I was flying (physically) around the country, conducting our programs in such places as a Jesuit training center, an Episcopal diocesan center, motels, YMCAs, retreat centers, living rooms; in short, wherever we were asked to present them, and wherever we could find enough space to “lay out” 20 to 40 people and their accompanying air mattresses, sleeping bags, and pillows in comfort.

As my time became devoted more and more to traveling around the country conducting programs, we hired a “real” secretary, an administrator, and trained several others to help facilitate the programs. An advisory board of 15 was formed to assist in the setting of policies for the Institute. Research continued in the lab as we expanded the Explorer team with other talented people. New tapes were developed as a result of our research and, by 1980, we decided to make Hemi-Sync tapes available to the public. This decision caused some consternation to one of our Menninger associates who felt it unwise to release such an intensive technology to the public at large!

In 1979 we moved the Institute to Nelson County, Virginia, about ten miles from our previous location. Here we built the residential center for our programs, later followed by the administrative offices, a conference building, and a new lab. As more people participated in our Gateway programs and experienced the Hemi-Sync tapes, our shape changed rapidly from a small, very personalized research effort to an organization which ballooned out nationally as well as internationally. Not only was this happening as a result of the extensive word-of-mouth reporting from the people experiencing profound effects from using the Hemi-Sync technology, it was also due to Bob’s first book, *JOURNEYS OUT OF THE BODY*, by then translated into seven languages, and the 1985 publication of its sequel, *FAR JOURNEYS*. From the massive amounts of mail we received in response to Bob’s books, to the written reports of people hailing the efficacy of Hemi-Sync, there was no doubt that we were on the leading edge of interfacing technology with human consciousness. We were challenging limiting belief systems with new considerations. As an example, one of the simplest, although perhaps most potent was, “I am more than my physical body.”

And then it happened. A movement of large enough proportions to have itself named. Enter the “New Age.” Suddenly there appeared/sprang a number of “disciplines,” tools, techniques and programs—many aimed at helping people obtain a desired state of being, many aimed at the commercial possibilities. Around us grew a new kind of language, with the accent on love and light, seasoned heavily with Eastern tradition references (Chakras, Kundalini, Chi, Ki, Samadhi, Satori, etc.).

For many years, we at the Institute have worked hard to demystify and westernize our approach to such phenomena as the out-of-body state, “channeling,” healing, paranormal functioning, whole-brain thinking, and the like. This is so Western minds can more comfortably use what we have to offer. This is also to strip from these areas of inquiry the limiting beliefs and rituals which enshroud the facts. However, we very much acknowledge the viability of the Eastern traditions. Having studied Zen Buddhism in Japan, I am personally aware of the richness of Eastern thought and of the difficulties encountered by the Western mind in fully grasping and applying it in our Western lifestyles.

During the past decade of the 1980s, we stayed on the leading edge of exploration and development of consciousness, though there was (and still is) a plethora of look-alike Hemi-Sync systems, tapes, and hardware. In 1985 we shortened our name to The Monroe Institute and changed our form to a nonprofit organization; this allowed for tax-deductible contributions, which in turn allowed us to expand our research. Since we have not been tethered by the necessity to please the scientific community (we still invite others to conduct such research), we forged ahead with our applications-oriented style of “Inquiry, Information, Innovation.” One such innovation came about in 1987 with our *Human Plus* series, which has proven to be a very effective training system for gaining control over one’s mental, physical, and emotional systems.

For the sake of brevity (or is it too late for that?), I am gliding over a number of years, and will simply note that there were many trials and errors, successes and failures, both with various projects and in relationships with people. It is important that I add here, too, that without the involvement and cooperation of all those connected with the Institute over the years, we would not be where we are today.

Moving up in time, during the last year alone, we have initiated our brainmapping research project (see BREAKTHROUGH Fall 1987, Fall 1988, and Fall 1989 for the genesis and development of the project), Personal Resource Exploration Program (PREP), and the talented subjects project; expanded our Professional Division to 190 members who are conducting various research projects in their professions; broadened our total membership at the Institute by 47%; and increased our staff by five people. Our *Gateway Outreach Program* now has 93 trainers; our *Voyage, Guidelines®*, and *H-Plus®* programs, 18 trainers.

As for 1990? We are designing and developing new, more sophisticated Hemi-Sync hardware. Research with the brainmapping equipment will continue. Bob's latest book, *ULTIMATE JOURNEY*, is scheduled to come out this year. We now have the entire *Gateway Experience*® translated and voiced in German, and the same is in process for French. There are plans for a London branch of the Institute. We also plan to have special, personalized Hemi-Sync tapes available. These are just a few of the ideas we have in the making for the forthcoming year.

There is one final comment I would like to make in closing. To all of you who have contributed your effort, time, thought, money, blood, sweat, and tears to our efforts, I salute and thank you. And, I suspect, so do the thousands of others who have benefited from all of our efforts.

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